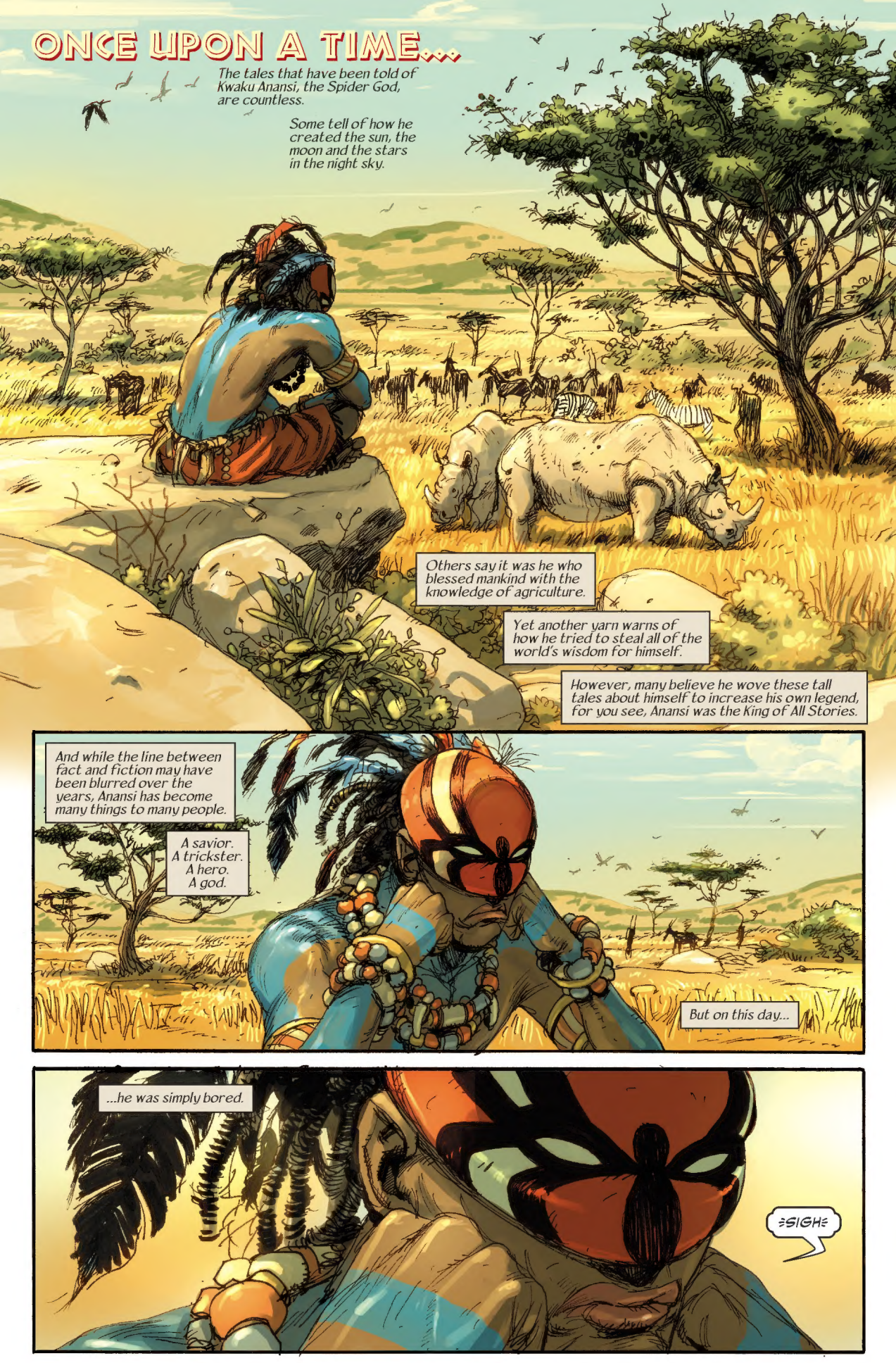
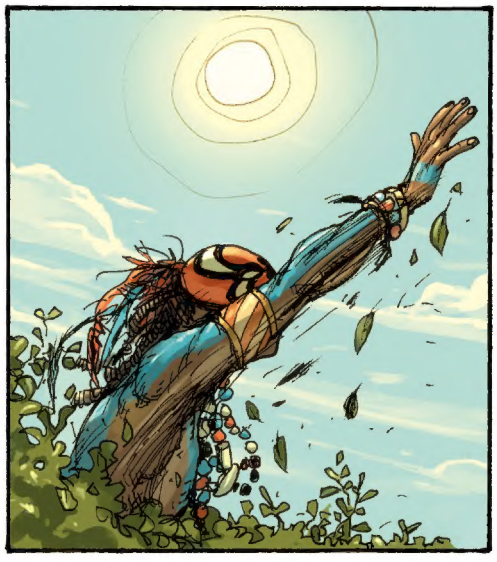
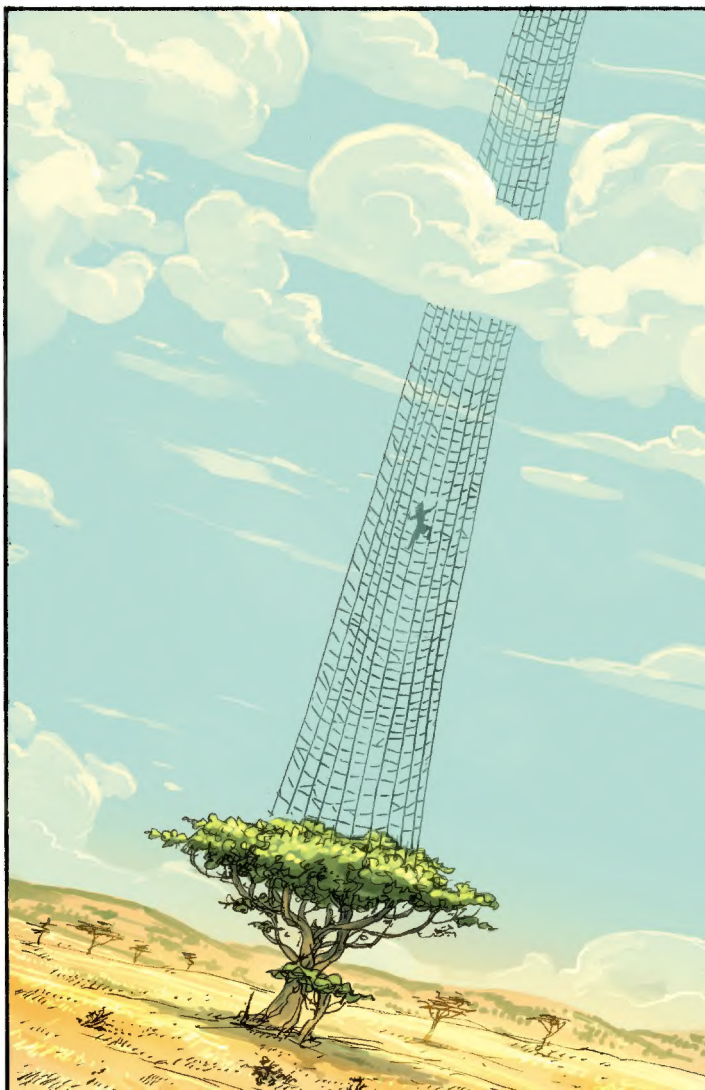
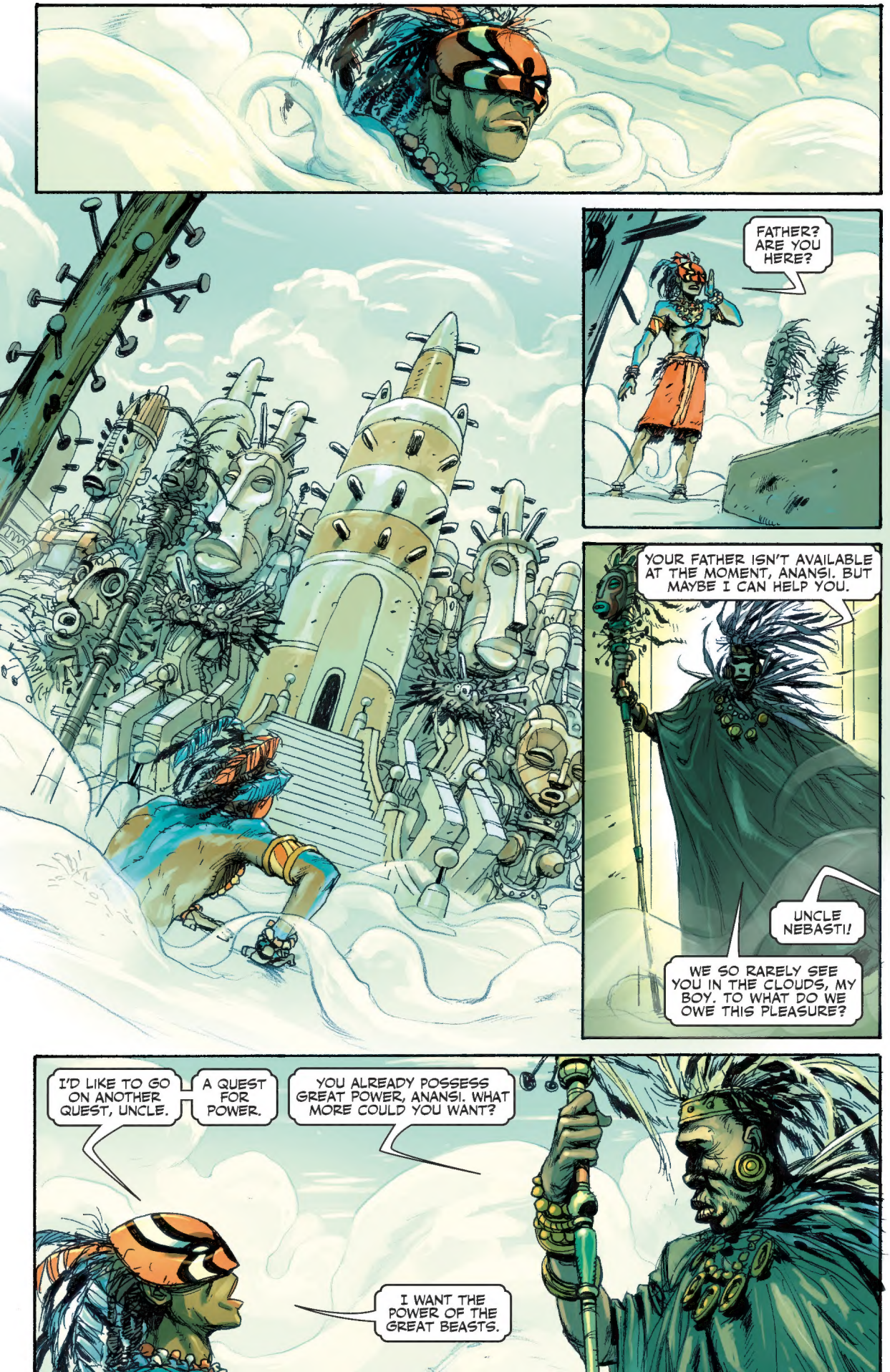
SPIDER-MAN
FAIRY TALES
MARVEL
LIMITED SERIES
2 OF 4
NIKO


ONCE UPON A TIME...
The tales that have been told of Kwaku Anansi, the Spider God, are countless.
Some tell of how he created the sun, the moon and the stars in the night sky.
Others say it was he who blessed mankind with the knowledge of agriculture.
Yet another yarn warns of how he tried to steal all of the world's wisdom for himself.
However, many believe he wove these tall tales about himself to increase his own legend, for you see, Anansi was the King of All Stories.
And while the line between fact and fiction may have been blurred over the years, Anansi has become many things to many people.
A savior.
A trickster.
A hero.
A god.
But on this day...
...he was simply bored.
=SIGH=

While Anansi possessed a great many virtues, both noble and nefarious...
...patience was not one of them.
And it was often from his restlessness...
...that many of his of his alleged adventures began.
MAYBE FATHER CAN HELP ME...



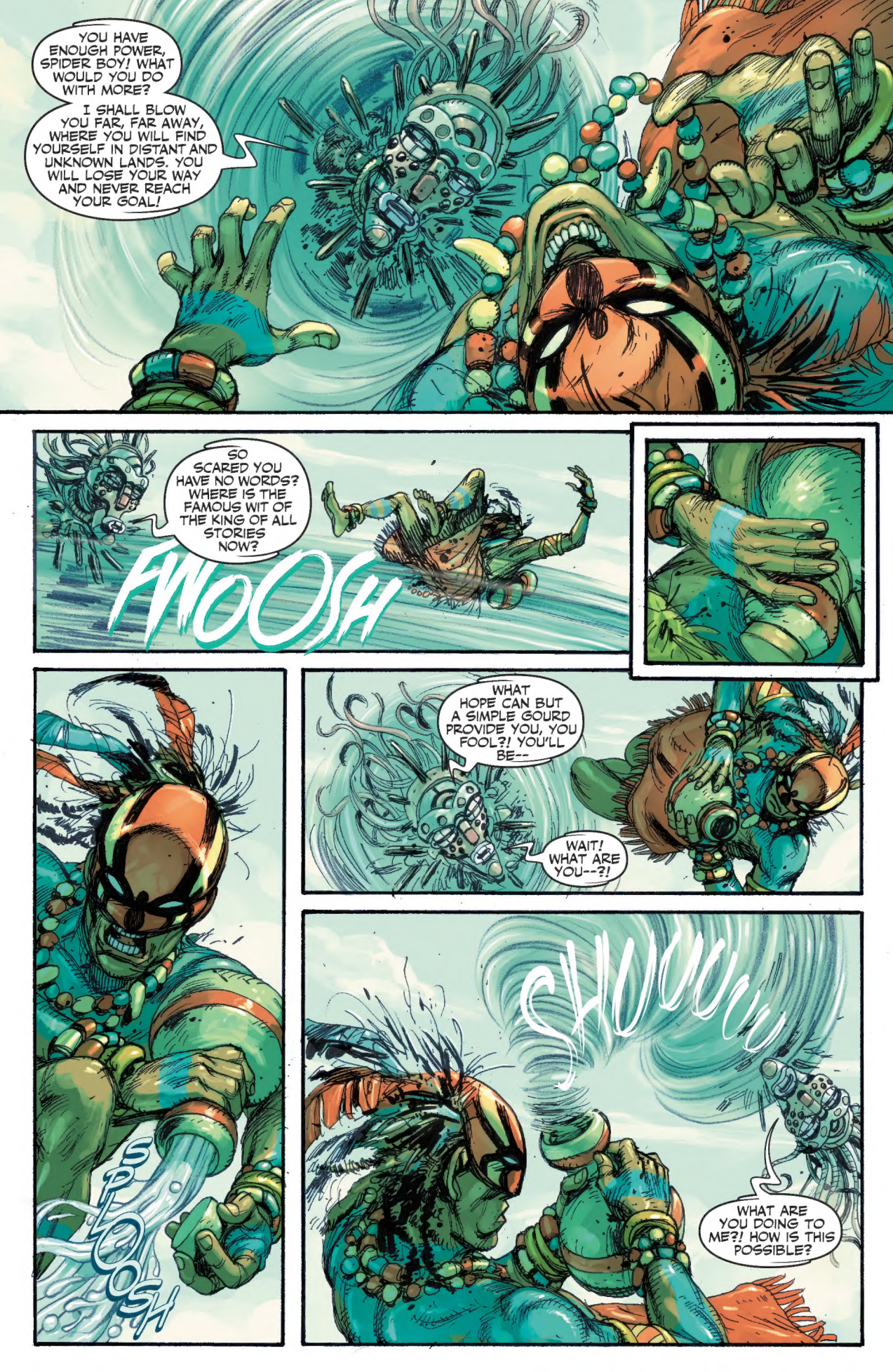



FATHER? ARE YOU HERE?
YOUR FATHER ISN'T AVAILABLE AT THE MOMENT, ANANSI. BUT MAYBE I CAN HELP YOU.
UNCLE NEBASTI!
WE SO RARELY SEE YOU IN THE CLOUDS, MY BOY. TO WHAT DO WE OWE THIS PLEASURE?
I'D LIKE TO GO ON ANOTHER QUEST, UNCLE.
A QUEST FOR POWER.
YOU ALREADY POSSESS GREAT POWER, ANANSI. WHAT MORE COULD YOU WANT?
I WANT THE POWER OF THE GREAT BEASTS.

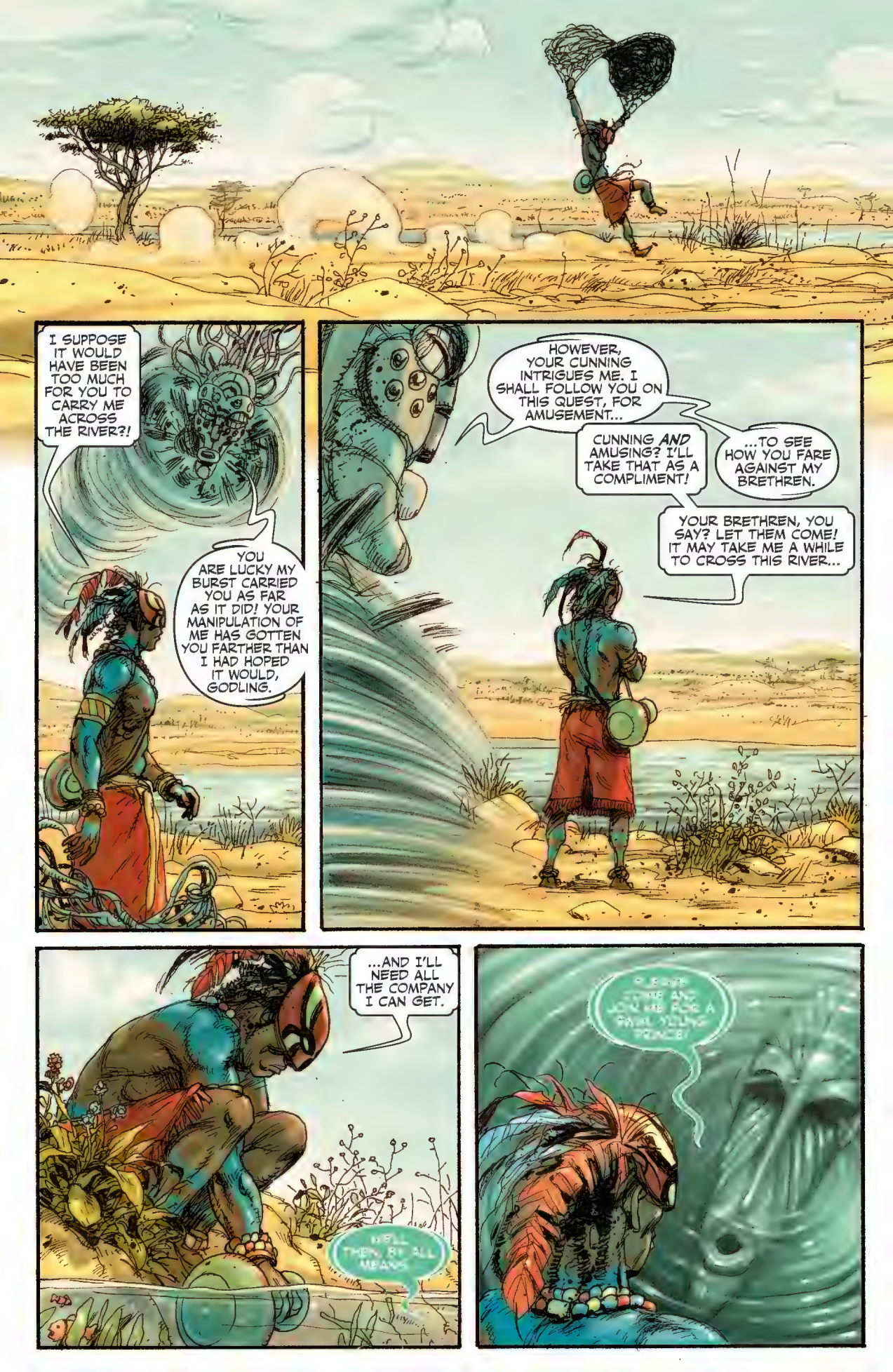
THE BEASTS, YOU SAY? THEY POSSESS GREAT POWER INDEED.
BUT TO WHAT END DO YOU SEEK THEIR POWER, ANANSI?
BEING ABLE TO BEND *STORIES* TO MY WISHES IS ONE THING.
THE POWER TO BEND THE WILLS OF OTHERS IS ANOTHER.
ANANSI, THERE ARE MANY WAYS IN WHICH TO ACHIEVE POWER IN THIS WORLD, THE BEST BEING TO EARN IT FOR YOURSELF.
BUT WHY GO TO ALL THAT TROUBLE WHEN YOU CAN SIMPLY TAKE IT?
AH, THE YOUTH OF TODAY...SO UNWILLING TO WORK FOR ANYTHING.
THERE ARE MANY KINDS OF POWER, BUT NO MATTER WHICH IT IS THAT YOU SEEK, YOU MUST ALWAYS BE CAREFUL.
FOR WITH GREAT POWER OF ANY KIND...
...THERE ALSO COMES GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY.
I KNOW THAT, UNCLE. YOU IMPARTED A SIMILAR WARNING WHEN I SET OFF ON MY LAST QUEST. RESPONSIBILITY IS NOT SOMETHING I TAKE LIGHTLY.
SAYS THE YOUNG GOD DUBBED THE "TRICKSTER".
AN OLD NICKNAME... ONE THAT'S NO LONGER USED.
IF ONLY I COULD BE SO SURE. BUT WHO AM I TO DENY THE WISHES OF MY BROTHER'S SON?
TO FIND THE POWER YOU DESIRE, YOU MUST TRAVEL TO THE FAR END OF THE MORTAL PLANE. YOU MUST SEARCH FOR THE SPIDER-ORCHID.
AS YOU KNOW, FOR OUR KIND THERE IS NO GREATER BEAST THAN THE SPIDER. BY INHALING THE POLLEN OF ITS SACRED FLOWER, YOU WILL BE GRANTED THAT WHICH YOU SEEK, MY BOY.
BE WARNED, HOWEVER. THE PATH OF POWER IS A DANGEROUS ONE TO FOLLOW.
THERE ARE MANY WHO WILL SEEK TO BLOCK YOUR PATH, TO STOP YOU FROM ACHIEVING YOUR GOAL AND ATTAINING SUCH POWER.
DON'T WORRY YOURSELF, UNCLE! OR DO YOU FORGET THAT I'M THE SPIDER GOD?

WHO COULD POSSIBLY STAND IN MY WAY THAT I COULD NOT DEFEAT?
THE JOURNEY IS LONG, AND EVEN GODS NEED TO DRINK. TAKE THIS, ANANSI.
GO NOW, AND MAY THE SPIRITS OF THE SPIDERS LOOK OVER YOU!
THANK YOU, UNCLE NEBASTI. I'LL MAKE YOU PROUD OF ME.
I HOPE YOU WILL, ANANSI.
And thus Anansi set out on his latest quest...
...one that would prove his most dangerous yet!

WHAT'S WITH THIS SUDDEN WIND...?
THAT WOULD BE ME.
For while Anansi may have chosen to ignore Nebasti's warnings...
...his words did not escape the notice of the winds that carried them.
I DARE TO STAND IN YOUR PATH!
A PATH THAT YOU WILL NO LONGER FOLLOW!
WOOSH

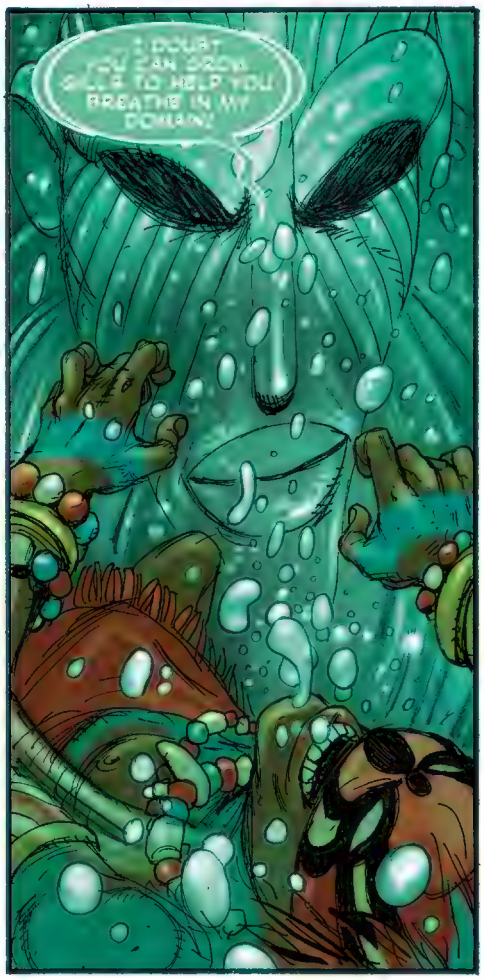

YOU HAVE ENOUGH POWER, SPIDER BOY! WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH MORE?
I SHALL BLOW YOU FAR, FAR AWAY, WHERE YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF IN DISTANT AND UNKNOWN LANDS. YOU WILL LOSE YOUR WAY AND NEVER REACH YOUR GOAL!
SO SCARED YOU HAVE NO WORDS? WHERE IS THE FAMOUS WIT OF THE KING OF ALL STORIES NOW?
FWOOSH
WHAT HOPE CAN BUT A SIMPLE GOURD PROVIDE YOU, YOU FOOL?! YOU'LL BE--
WAIT! WHAT ARE YOU--?!
SPLOOSH
SHUUUU
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ME?! HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?

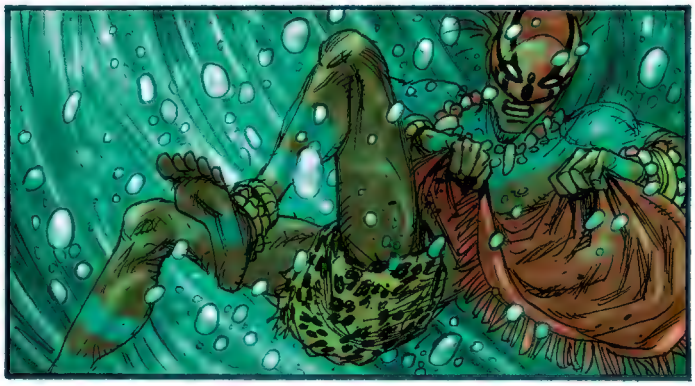
EVEN THE WILDEST OF WINDS CAN BE CONTAINED...
NOOO!!
PUP
SET ME FREE!
ONLY ON ONE CONDITION, MIGHTY WIND.
THE MOMENT YOU EMERGE FROM MY GOURD, YOU MUST BLOW ME BACK IN THE DIRECTION I CAME FROM.
YES, PLEASE! PLEASE! I'LL DO ANY-THING.
I'M HOLDING YOU TO YOUR WORD, SPIRIT.
FWO
OSH
BE GONE WITH YOU!

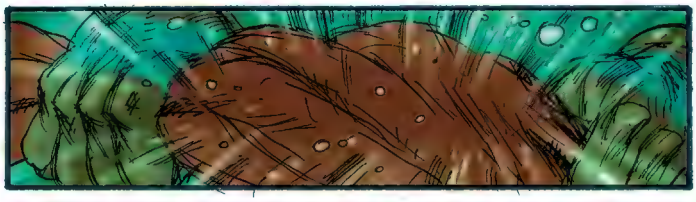

I SUPPOSE IT WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO MUCH FOR YOU TO CARRY ME ACROSS THE RIVER?!
YOU ARE LUCKY MY BURST CARRIED YOU AS FAR AS IT DID! YOUR MANIPULATION OF ME HAS GOTTEN YOU FARTHER THAN I HAD HOPED IT WOULD, GODLING.
HOWEVER, YOUR CUNNING INTRIGUES ME. I SHALL FOLLOW YOU ON THIS QUEST, FOR AMUSEMENT...
CUNNING AND AMUSING? I'LL TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT!
...TO SEE HOW YOU FARE AGAINST MY BRETHREN.
YOUR BRETHREN, YOU SAY? LET THEM COME! IT MAY TAKE ME A WHILE TO CROSS THIS RIVER...
...AND I'LL NEED ALL THE COMPANY I CAN GET.
I'LL THEN BE ALL MEANS
PLEASE STOP AND JOIN ME FOR A FINAL YELLOW PENCIL!

SPLOOOSH

WHILE YOU MAY HAVE SPROUTED WINGS TO HELP YOU WITH THE WIND...
SPLAASH

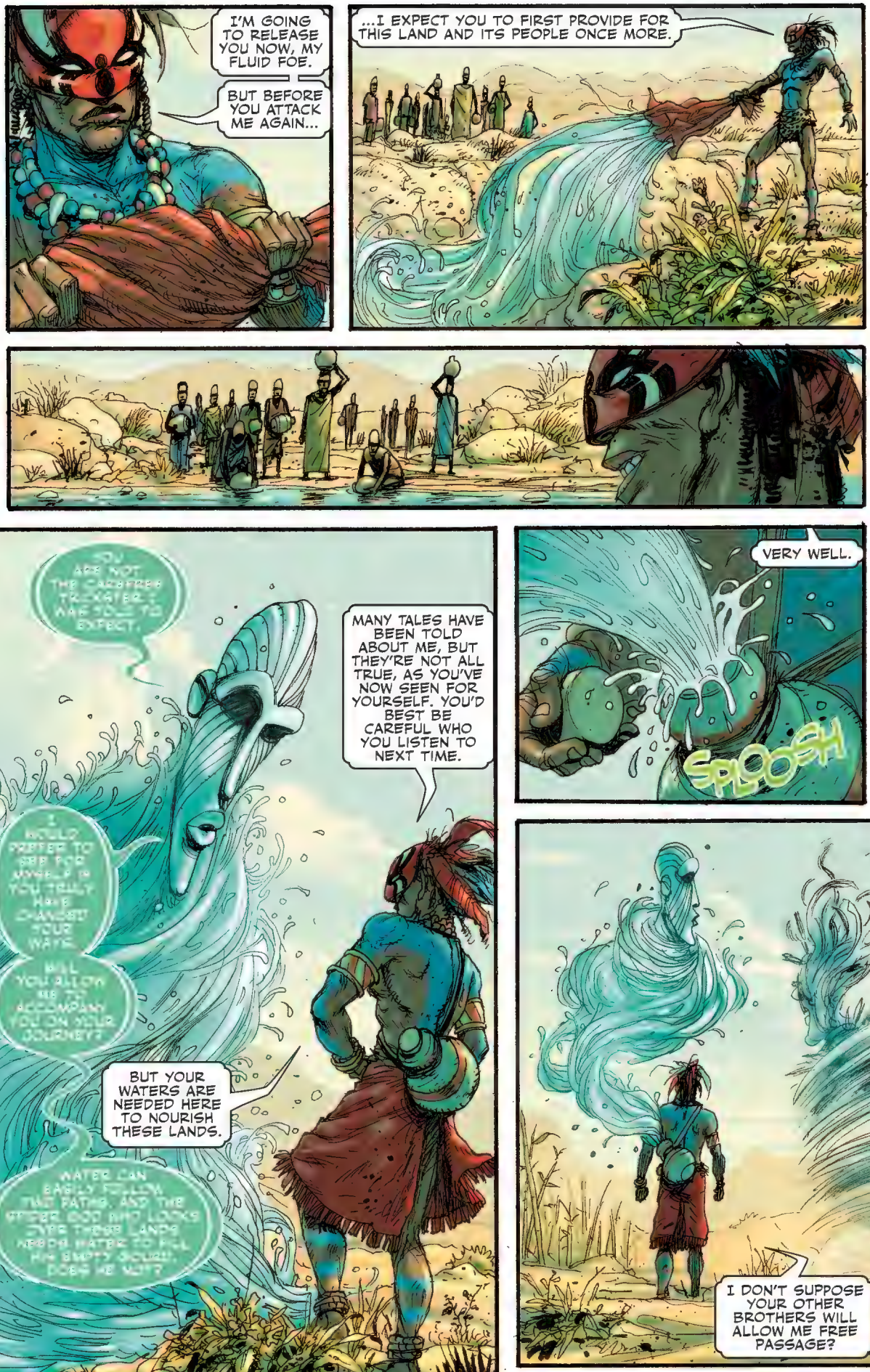

I DOUBT YOU CAN GROW GILLS TO HELP YOU BREATHE IN MY DOMAIN!



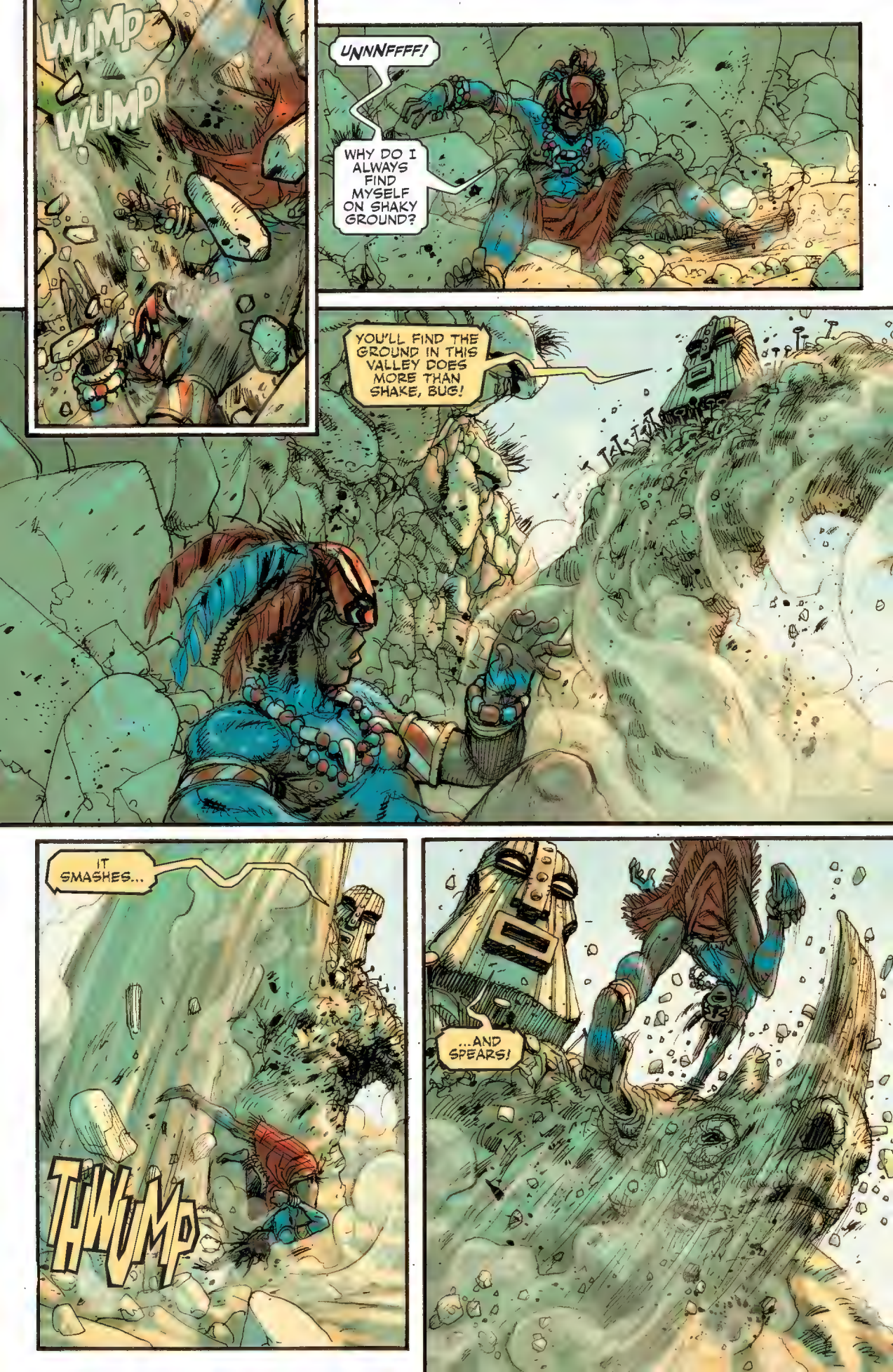


IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!! HOW COULD YOU TWIST NO...?

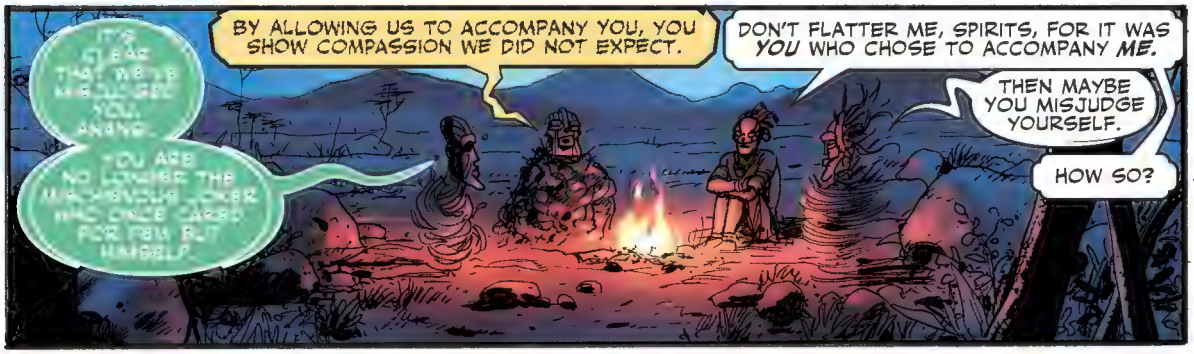
SSPPSSHH
GASP
THERE'S NO NEED FOR GILLS...
...WHEN CHANGING MY KILT TO A SPONGE ENSURES THERE'S NO WATER LEFT IN WHICH TO DROWN.
NO WATER LEFT FOR ANYONE...


I'M GOING TO RELEASE YOU NOW, MY FLUID FOE.
BUT BEFORE YOU ATTACK ME AGAIN...
...I EXPECT YOU TO FIRST PROVIDE FOR THIS LAND AND ITS PEOPLE ONCE MORE.
YOU ARE NOT THE CARETTA'S TRICKSTER. I HAVE YOU TO THANK FOR THAT.
MANY TALES HAVE BEEN TOLD ABOUT ME, BUT THEY'RE NOT ALL TRUE, AS YOU'VE NOW SEEN FOR YOURSELF. YOU'D BEST BE CAREFUL WHO YOU LISTEN TO NEXT TIME.
I WOULD PREFER TO SEE FOR MYSELF IF YOU TRULY HAVE CHANGED YOUR WAYS.
WILL YOU ALLOW ME TO ACCOMPANY YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY?
BUT YOUR WATERS ARE NEEDED HERE TO NOURISH THESE LANDS.
WATER CAN EASILY FOLLOW TWO PATHS, AND THE OTHER GOD WHO LOOKS OVER THESE LANDS NEEDS WATER TO FILL HIS EMPTY SOCKET. DOES HE NOT?
VERY WELL.
SPLOOSH
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOUR OTHER BROTHERS WILL ALLOW ME FREE PASSAGE?

HA! SURELY YOU WISH YOU HAD MY WINDS BENEATH YOUR WINGS AGAIN NOW, EH, SPIDER-BOY?!
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY WAY TO FLY, SMUG SPIRIT.
SNAP
CHUK
WHISH
KKRSSH

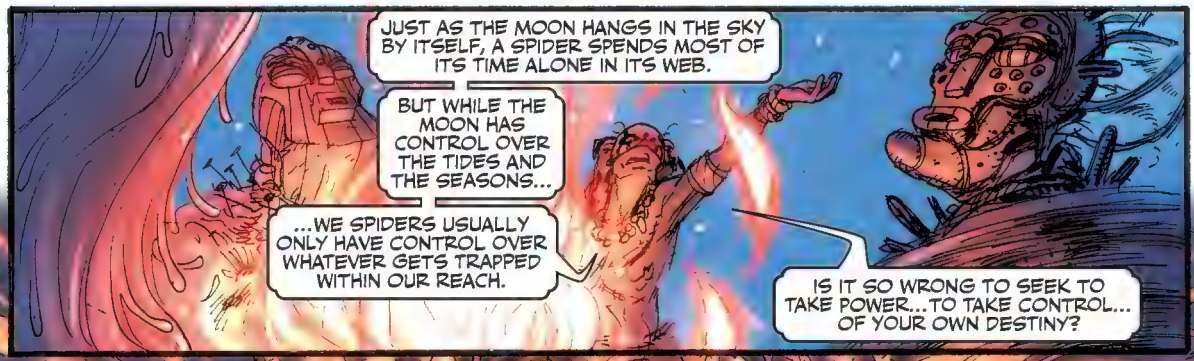

WUMP
WUMP
UNNNFFFF!
WHY DO I ALWAYS FIND MYSELF ON SHAKY GROUND?
YOU'LL FIND THE GROUND IN THIS VALLEY DOES MORE THAN SHAKE, BUG!
IT SMASHES...
THWUMP
...AND SPEARS!

SLITHERS...
...AND SQUEEZES!
AS YOU'LL NOW FEEL FIRSTHAND AS I CRUSH YOUR BONES AND FORCE THE AIR FROM YOUR LUNGS, YOUNG GOD.
THEN LET ME TAKE ONE LAST BREATH, YOU SANDY SERPENT...
WHISH
HOW CAN THIS BE...?!
LET US WATCH AS THE SAND IN THIS VALLEY NOW SPRAYS!
NO, NO... PLEASE, I BEG FOR YOUR FORGIVENESS AND MERCY.
WHILE I DO WISH TO SEE THE WORLD ABROAD, I WOULD PREFER TO DO IT WITH ALL MY PARTICLES IN PLACE.
YOU'VE NEVER LEFT THIS VALLEY?
NO, THE ROCK WALLS KEEP ME TRAPPED. I LIVE BORED BEYOND BELIEF, WITH FEW VISITORS.
JUST AS MY BROTHERS NOW DO, PLEASE ALLOW ME TO CONTINUE WITH YOU ON YOUR QUEST.
BOREDOM IS SOMETHING I'M ALL TOO FAMILIAR WITH...

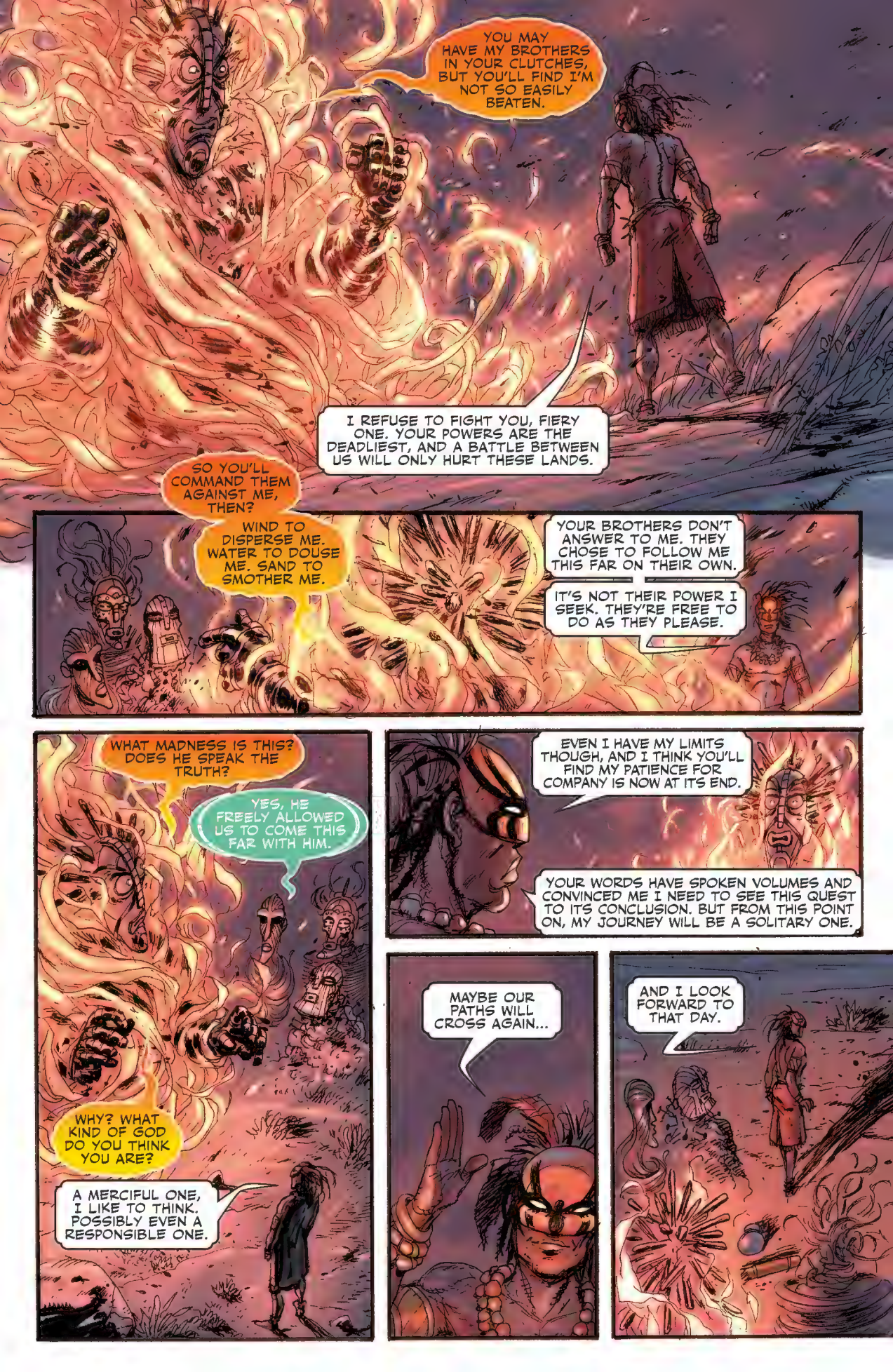

IT'S CLEAR THAT WE'LL NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN.
YOU ARE NO LONGER THE MANCHEVRON LOKER WHO ONCE CARED FOR FEW BUT HIMSELF.
BY ALLOWING US TO ACCOMPANY YOU, YOU SHOW COMPASSION WE DID NOT EXPECT.
DON'T FLATTER ME, SPIRITS, FOR IT WAS *YOU* WHO CHOSE TO ACCOMPANY *ME.*
THEN MAYBE YOU MISJUDGE YOURSELF.
HOW SO?

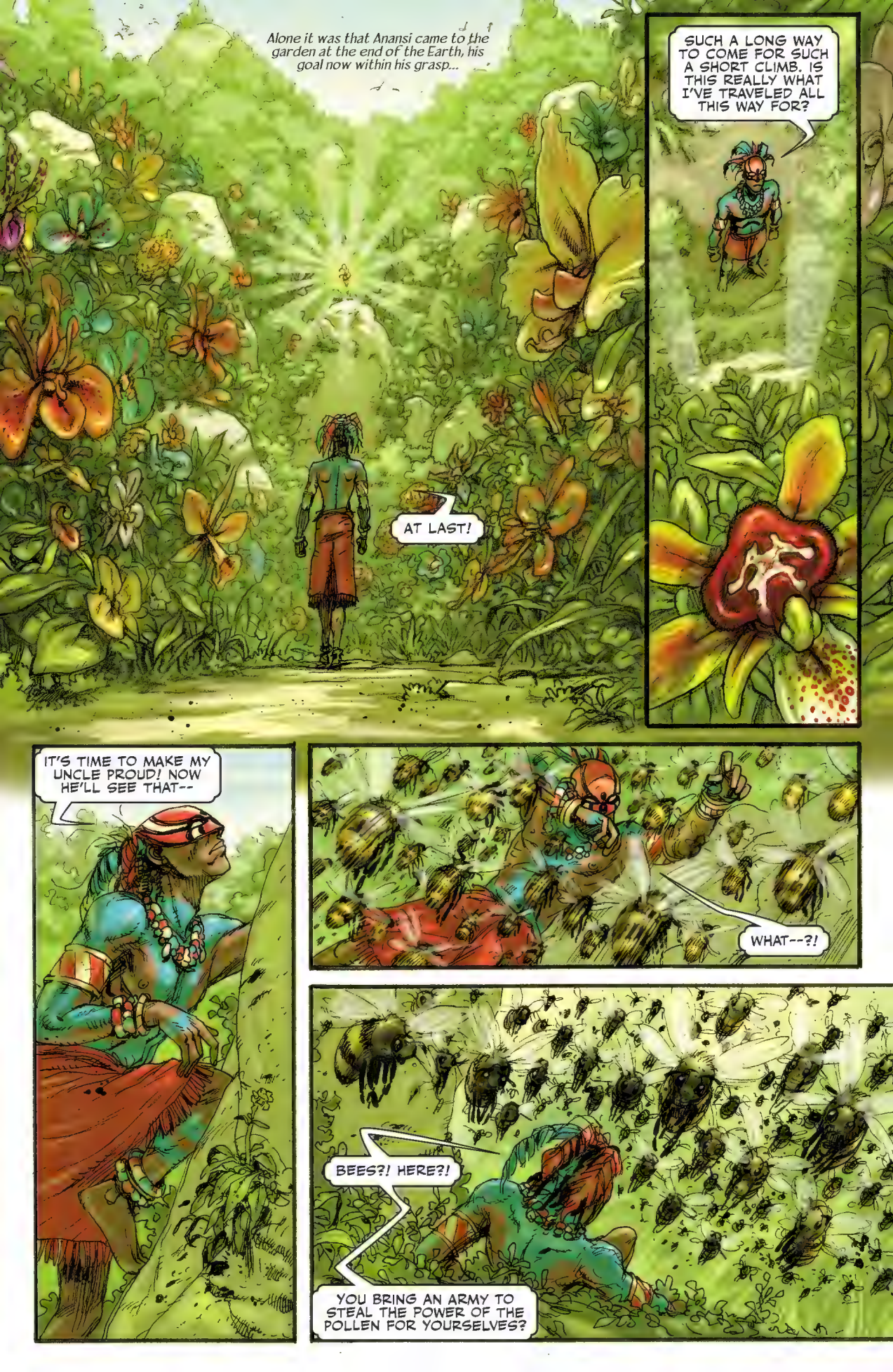
LOOK HOW YOU CHOOSE TO DEFEAT EACH OF US. YOU DID NOT PUSH US AWAY.
YOU USED YOUR POWERS TO PULL US *IN,* TO BRING US CLOSER TO YOU.
AND EVEN THOUGH WE TRIED TO BLOCK YOUR PATH, YOU ALLOW US TO TRAVEL WITH YOU.
ARE THESE NOT THE ACTIONS OF A MAN WHO WAS LOOKING FOR COMPANIONSHIP ALL ALONG? HAVE YOU NOT PULLED US INTO YOUR WEB, SO TO SPEAK?
NONSENSE!! ALL I WANT IS THE POWER OF THE SPIDER-ORCHID!

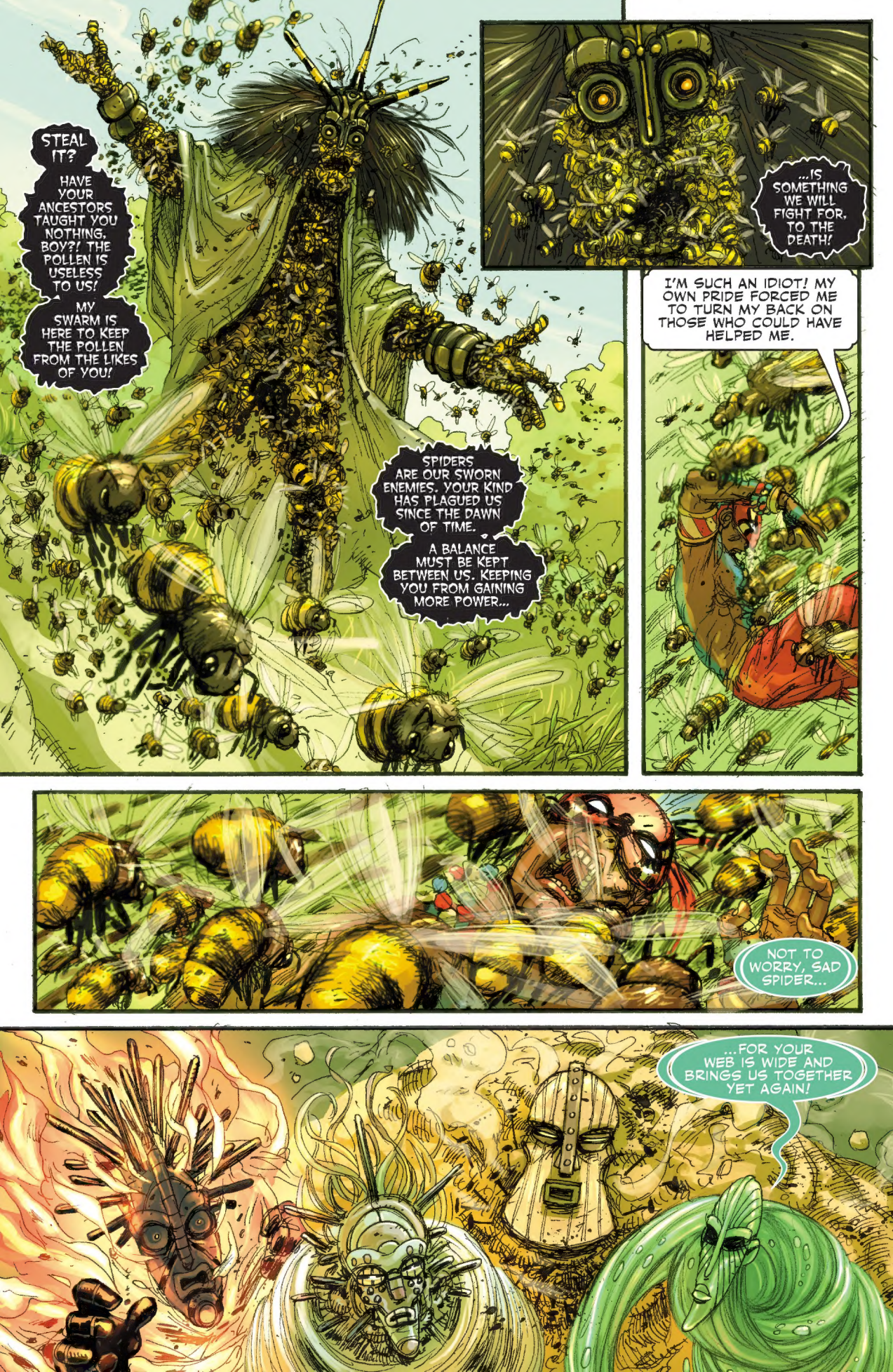
YOU EASILY DEFEATED THE THREE OF US IN COMBAT--
--CLEARLY PROVING YOU ALREADY POSSESS GREAT POWER.
WHY DO YOU SEEK MORE?
I WANT THE POWER TO CONTROL OTHERS!
TO WHAT END?
SO THAT PEOPLE WILL DO AS I SAY.
SO THAT I'LL NEVER--
NEVER BE BORED AGAIN?
NEVER HAVE TO BE ALONE?

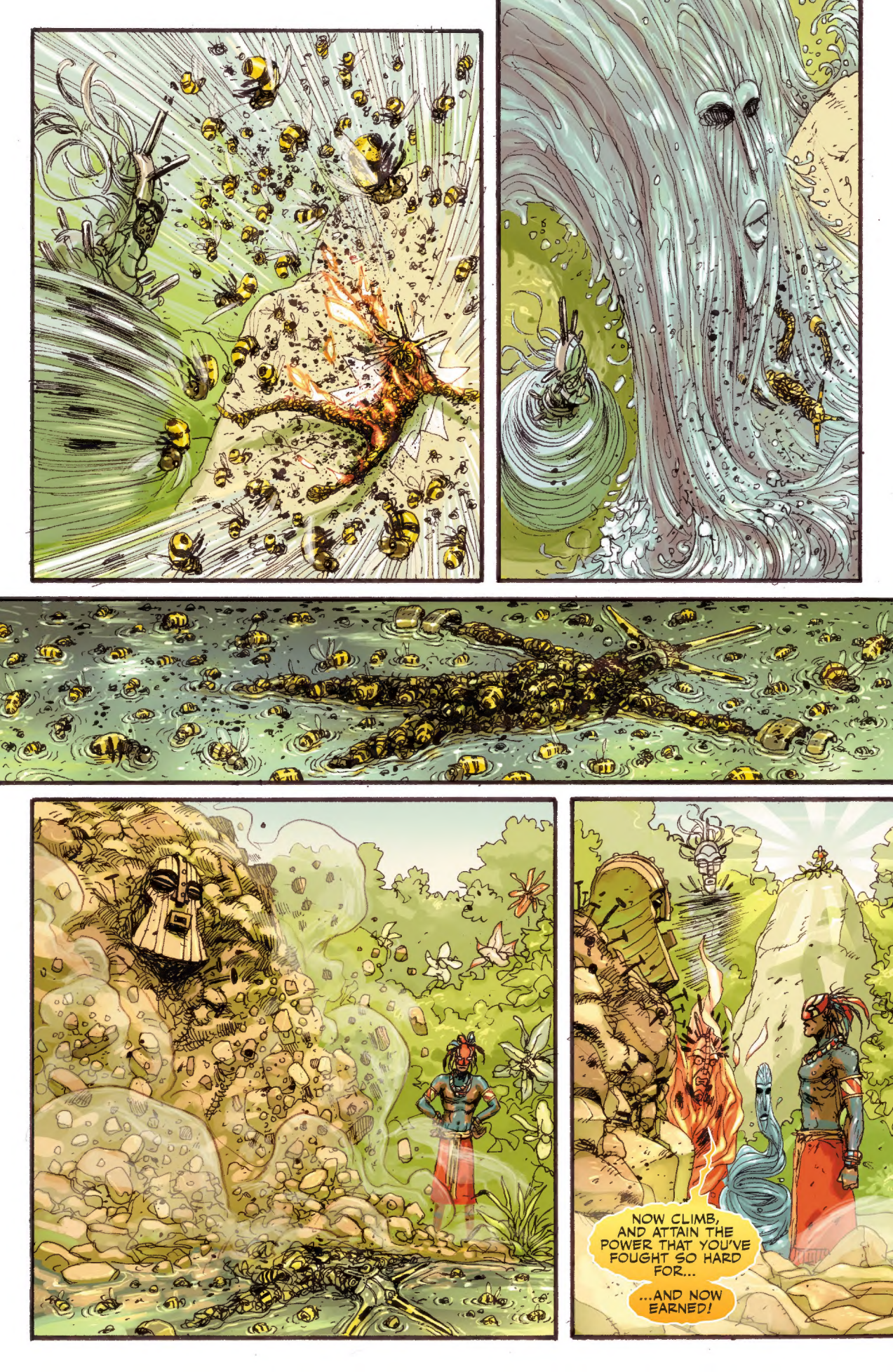

JUST AS THE MOON HANGS IN THE SKY BY ITSELF, A SPIDER SPENDS MOST OF ITS TIME ALONE IN ITS WEB.
BUT WHILE THE MOON HAS CONTROL OVER THE TIDES AND THE SEASONS...
...WE SPIDERS USUALLY ONLY HAVE CONTROL OVER WHATEVER GETS TRAPPED WITHIN OUR REACH.
IS IT SO WRONG TO SEEK TO TAKE POWER...TO TAKE CONTROL... OF YOUR OWN DESTINY?

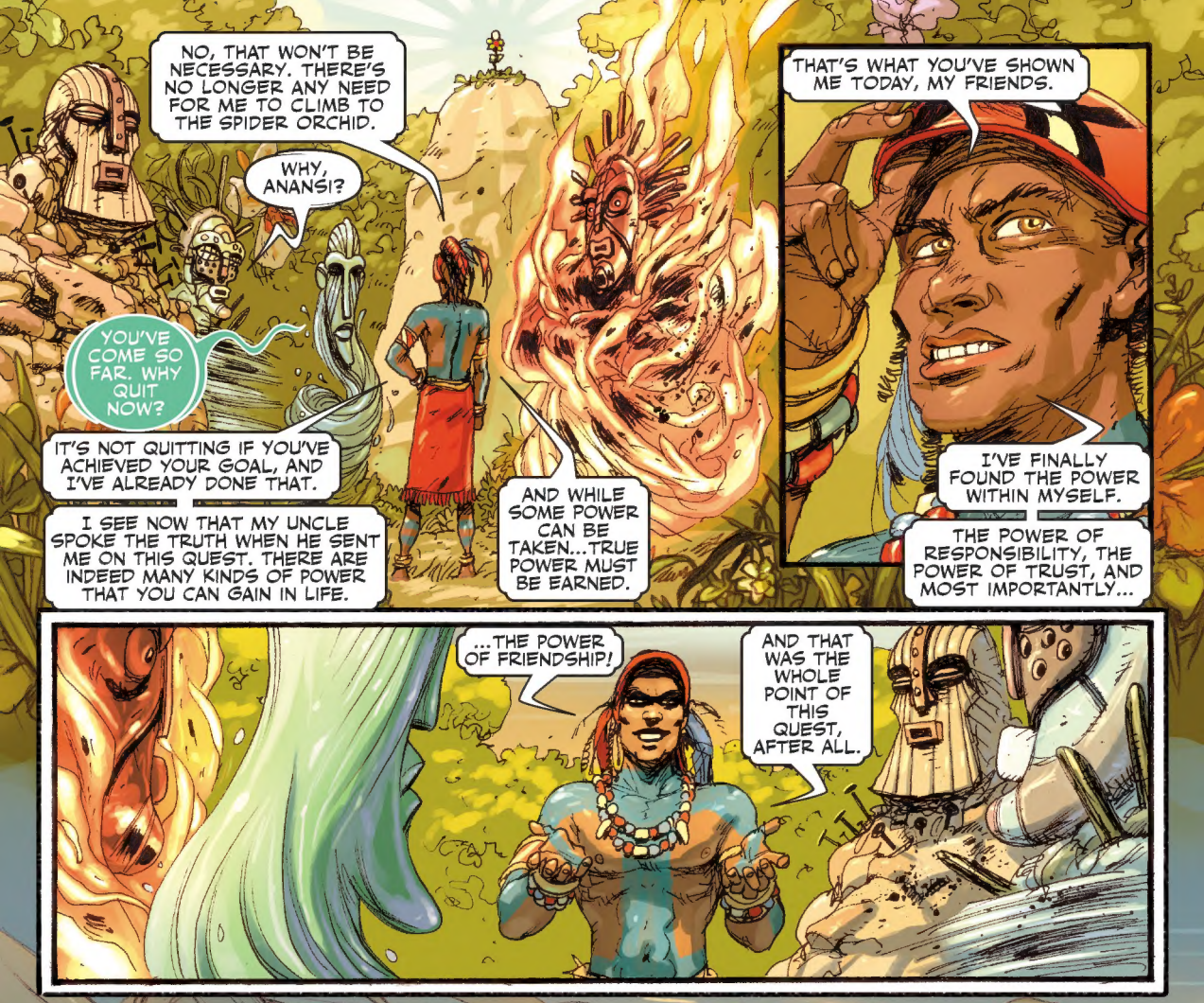
BWWWSSH
IT IS WHEN DONE FOR SELFISH REASONS!!


YOU MAY HAVE MY BROTHERS IN YOUR CLUTCHES, BUT YOU'LL FIND I'M NOT SO EASILY BEATEN.
I REFUSE TO FIGHT YOU, FIERY ONE. YOUR POWERS ARE THE DEADLIEST, AND A BATTLE BETWEEN US WILL ONLY HURT THESE LANDS.
SO YOU'LL COMMAND THEM AGAINST ME, THEN?
WIND TO DISPERSE ME. WATER TO DOUSE ME. SAND TO SMOTHER ME.
YOUR BROTHERS DON'T ANSWER TO ME. THEY CHOSE TO FOLLOW ME THIS FAR ON THEIR OWN.
IT'S NOT THEIR POWER I SEEK. THEY'RE FREE TO DO AS THEY PLEASE.
WHAT MADNESS IS THIS? DOES HE SPEAK THE TRUTH?
YES, HE FREELY ALLOWED US TO COME THIS FAR WITH HIM.
WHY? WHAT KIND OF GOD DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
A MERCIFUL ONE, I LIKE TO THINK. POSSIBLY EVEN A RESPONSIBLE ONE.
EVEN I HAVE MY LIMITS THOUGH, AND I THINK YOU'LL FIND MY PATIENCE FOR COMPANY IS NOW AT ITS END.
YOUR WORDS HAVE SPOKEN VOLUMES AND CONVINCED ME I NEED TO SEE THIS QUEST TO ITS CONCLUSION. BUT FROM THIS POINT ON, MY JOURNEY WILL BE A SOLITARY ONE.
MAYBE OUR PATHS WILL CROSS AGAIN...
AND I LOOK FORWARD TO THAT DAY.


Alone it was that Anansi came to the garden at the end of the Earth, his goal now within his grasp...
AT LAST!
SUCH A LONG WAY TO COME FOR SUCH A SHORT CLIMB. IS THIS REALLY WHAT I'VE TRAVELED ALL THIS WAY FOR?
IT'S TIME TO MAKE MY UNCLE PROUD! NOW HE'LL SEE THAT--
WHAT--?!
BEES?! HERE?!
YOU BRING AN ARMY TO STEAL THE POWER OF THE POLLEN FOR YOURSELVES?


STEAL IT?
HAVE YOUR ANCESTORS TAUGHT YOU NOTHING, BOY?! THE POLLEN IS USELESS TO US!
MY SWARM IS HERE TO KEEP THE POLLEN FROM THE LIKES OF YOU!
SPIDERS ARE OUR SWORN ENEMIES. YOUR KIND HAS PLAGUED US SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME.
A BALANCE MUST BE KEPT BETWEEN US. KEEPING YOU FROM GAINING MORE POWER...
...IS SOMETHING WE WILL FIGHT FOR, TO THE DEATH!
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT! MY OWN PRIDE FORCED ME TO TURN MY BACK ON THOSE WHO COULD HAVE HELPED ME.
NOT TO WORRY, SAD SPIDER...
...FOR YOUR WEB IS WIDE AND BRINGS US TOGETHER YET AGAIN!


NOW CLIMB, AND ATTAIN THE POWER THAT YOU'VE FOUGHT SO HARD FOR...
...AND NOW EARNED!


NO, THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY. THERE'S NO LONGER ANY NEED FOR ME TO CLIMB TO THE SPIDER ORCHID.
WHY, ANANSI?
YOU'VE COME SO FAR. WHY QUIT NOW?
IT'S NOT QUITTING IF YOU'VE ACHIEVED YOUR GOAL, AND I'VE ALREADY DONE THAT.
I SEE NOW THAT MY UNCLE SPOKE THE TRUTH WHEN HE SENT ME ON THIS QUEST. THERE ARE INDEED MANY KINDS OF POWER THAT YOU CAN GAIN IN LIFE.
AND WHILE SOME POWER CAN BE TAKEN...TRUE POWER MUST BE EARNED.
THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE SHOWN ME TODAY, MY FRIENDS.
I'VE FINALLY FOUND THE POWER WITHIN MYSELF.
THE POWER OF RESPONSIBILITY, THE POWER OF TRUST, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY...

Thus did Anansi's latest quest come to its end.

Foe became friend as the young spider god learned the true meaning of power.

Uncle Nebasti looked down from the clouds and smiled, pleased that his nephew now had companions to help ease his restless soul.

THE SPIRITS OF FRIENDSHIP

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Or so he hoped...